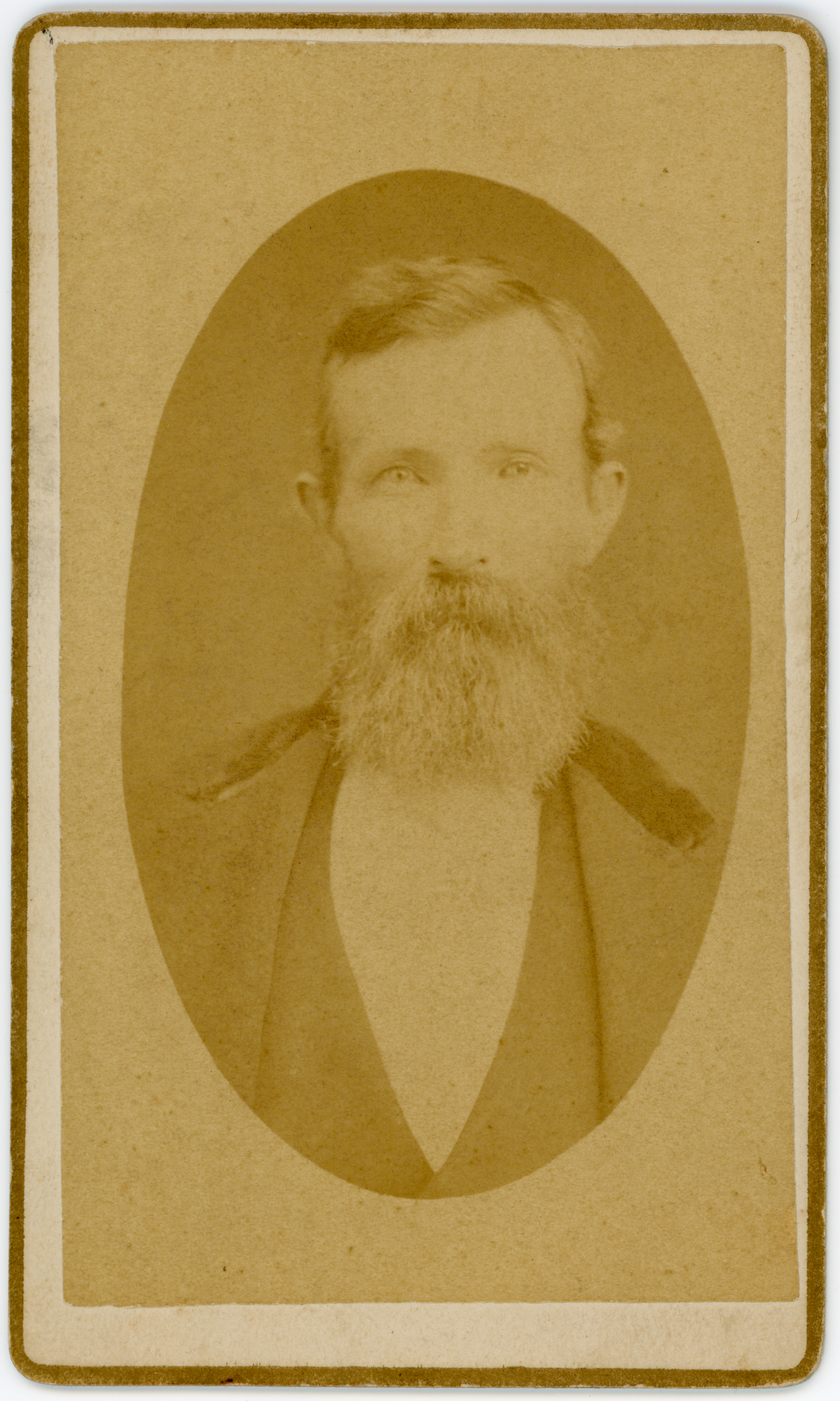

8634

F. A. ST[illegible] H.

ART[illegible]ST

COMMER[illegible]REET,

SALEM, - [illegible]OREGON.

DEALER IN ST[illegible]OSCOPIC VIEWS.
Scenes of [illegible] and surrounding Country.

FIRST CL[illegible]HOTOGRAPHS

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LIFE SIZE [illegible]ORTRAITS

In India Ink, [illegible] Oil or

WATER C[illegible]ORS.

NEGATIVES P[illegible]RVED.

Duplicate copies 25 an[illegible]nts. Pictures copied and enlarge[illegible]

A. L. STINSON, PRINTER,

Make your tie
Button—Over and
Under—Pull Tight

Possible Portrait of Edward Gray Young or Ambrose Garrett Young

From the Vail Dear Steel Box

Reflections

Jeffrey Hunt

July 12 2026

This unidentified portrait was preserved in the Vail Dear Steel Box and appears to be connected with the Young family of Oakland, Oregon. Based on the photographer's imprint, F. A. Smith of Salem, the photograph was probably made during the late 1870s.

The writing on the reverse appears to reference "Mrs. … C. G. Young, Oakland," although the initials are difficult to interpret. The first mark may be an A, an H, a plus sign, or a separate notation, while the C and G appear clearer. The inscription may identify the owner, recipient, or later source of the photograph rather than the man pictured. The numbering, pasted paper, and handwritten markings on the back also raise the possibility that the portrait was once submitted for an obituary, memorial notice, or another form of publication.

The two strongest candidates are Edward Gray Young and Ambrose Garrett Young, both brothers of my great-great-grandmother, Amanda Caroline Young Vail. No confirmed portrait of either man has yet been located for comparison, so the identification remains unresolved.

Edward Gray Young became one of Oakland's leading merchants and bankers. The E. G. Young Building, completed in 1892, housed his mercantile business, bank, and an upstairs opera house. It survived the devastating Oakland fire of 1899 and remains the architectural centerpiece of the historic downtown district, one of Oregon's best-preserved nineteenth-century commercial centers. If this portrait proves to be Edward Gray Young, it may be an important surviving image of the man associated with one of Oakland's defining landmarks.

Ambrose Garrett Young remains an equally plausible possibility. He belonged to the same pioneer generation and family network and was closely connected with Amanda Caroline Young Vail and the broader Young family of Douglas County.

The enhanced image shown beside the original is AI-assisted and is included only to make some damaged or indistinct details easier to visualize. It is not a true restoration and should not be treated as evidence for identification. Current AI tools regenerate portions of an image and may alter facial proportions or introduce details that were not present in the original. For genealogical and historical research, the original photograph remains the primary and most reliable record.